

Message Text

SECRET

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15
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 COA-02 CG-00 DLOS-06 DRC-01 /116 W
----- 086072

P 190920Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2547
INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY
JCS PRIORITY

S E C R E T SEOUL 1163

JOINT EMBASSY/UNC MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINS KS KN
SUBJECT: FISHING BOAT INCIDENT

1. FOLLOWING IS ROUND UP AND ASSESSMENT OF BASIC
INFORMATION NOW AVAILABLE ON WHAT HAPPENED IN FISHING
BOAT INCIDENT NORTHWEST OF PAENGYONG-DO ISLAND, FEB 15.

2. AT 1015 HOURS A NORTH KOREAN GUNBOAT FIRED ON AND SANK
A SOUTH KOREAN FISHING TRAWLER, THE SUWON HO NO. 32
OPERATING OUT OF INCHON, AND IN COURSE OF SAME ENGAGEMENT
APPREHENDED A SECOND TRAWLER THE SUWON HO NO. 33. FIRST
REPORTS WHICH ORIGINATED FROM SUWON HO 33 AND WERE RELAYED
VIA INCHON ROK NAVY SECTOR COMMANDER INDICATED COORDINATES
OF INCIDENT WERE 38 DEGREES 05 MINUTES NORTH LONGITUDE
AND 123 DEGREES 55 MINUTES EAST LATITUDE, A POINT IN
THE VICINITY OF NORTHERN LIMIT LINE ABOUT THIRTY MILES
FROM NORTH KOREAN SHORE. SUBSEQUENT EVALUATION OF ALL
AVAILABLE INFORMATION, NOW ACCEPTED BY ROK NAVY AS WELL AS
INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY BUT NOT RELEASED PUBLICALLY,

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INDICATES INCIDENT PROBABLY OCCURRED AT 38 DEGREES 15

MINUTES NORTH/124 DEGREES 11 MINUTES EAST, A POINT STILL
30 MILES TO SEA BUT 12.5 MILES FURTHER NORTH THAN ORIGINAL
COMMUNICATIONS INDICATED.

3. AT 1104 HOURS COMNAVFOR KOREA ORDERED SEARCH AND
RESCUE (SAR) MISSION IN VICINITY OF REPORTED INCIDENT AS
FAR NORTH AS 38 DEGREES-10 NORTH BUT APD WHICH WAS DISPATCHED
FOUND NO SURVIVORS NOR TRACES OF INCIDENT; WE NOW KNOW
BECAUSE IT CONDUCTED SEARCH WELL TO SOUTH OF ACTUAL
INCIDENT. JUST BEFORE SAR WAS ORDERED IN CLEAR RADIO
SIGNAL BY ROK FLEET COMMANDER, NORTH KOREAN GUNBOAT
RELEASED SURVIVING TRAWLER, SUWON HO NO. 33. SUWON HO 33
HOWEVER, WAS SUBSEQUENTLY RECAPTURED BEFORE IT GOT BACK
TO NORTHERN LIMIT LINE AND TRAWLER AND CREW PLUS ONE
REPORTED SURVIVOR OF SUNKEN TRAWLER NO. 32 WERE TAKEN INTO
A NORTH KOREAN PORT.

4. IT IS INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT HERE THAT EPISODE WAS
RESULT OF AGGRESSIVE PATROLLING ACTION BY NORTH KOREAN
PATROL BOAT WHICH CAME UPON SOUTH KOREAN FISHING CRAFT
NORTH OF NLL (BUT IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS). THERE IS NO
PRESENT EVIDENCE THAT EPISODE WAS EFFORT TO PROVOKE ROK
OR A NORTH KOREAN MOVE TO DELIBERATELY ESCALATE MILITARY
TENSIONS.
HABIB

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NNN

Message Attributes

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30 JUN 2005

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